

Message Text

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ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W
-----071815 240920Z /12

R 231705Z JUN 77
FM AMEMBASSY LISBON
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1879
INFO AMEMBASSY ABIDJAN
AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS
AMEMBASSY KINSHASA
AMEMBASSY LIBREVILLE
AMEMBASSY LUSAKA
AMEMBASSY PARIS
USLO PEKING

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 3 LISBON 4845

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: EINV PFOR PINS MILI AO PO US CH
SUBJECT: JUNE 20 MEETING WITH FLEC

REFS: (A) PARIS 17901 (NOTAL) (B) LISBON 4582 (NOTAL)

SUMMARY: FLEC REP BERNARD BORY STATED THAT EXPECTATION OF US HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE WAS ONLY FACTOR PREVENTING FLEC FROM TURNING TO PRC FOR SUPPORT. FLEC HAS SUFFERED SERIOUS REVERSES IN PAST FEW WEEKS, INCLUDING LOSS OF BUCO ZAO AND BELIZE, THREATS TO SANDA MASSALA CAPITAL, AND CONGO-BRAZZAVILLE'S RAPPROCHEMENT WITH ANGOLA. FLEC WILL ATTEMPT TO FORCE PORTUGUESE DECISION ON RECOGNITION BY EMBARRASSING GOP BY REVEALING DETAILS OF SEEMING GOP APPROVAL OF FLEC. END SUMMARY.

1. CABINDA ENCLAVE LIBERATION FRONT (FLEC) FOREIGN MINISTER BERNARD BORY AND MILITARY CHIEF OF STAFF
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AFONSO BISSAFI CALLED ON EMBASSY JUNE 20.

2. PHOTOGRAPHS: A PRINCIPAL REASON FOR BORY'S VISIT WAS, AS HE PUT IT, TO "PROVE" FLEC MILITARY CAPABILITY TO USG. ACCORDINGLY, HE SHOWED EMBOFFS OVER A HUNDRED PHOTOGRAPHS OF WHAT HE CLAIMED WERE FLEC SOLDIERS, WEAPONS, LEADERS, AND INSTALLATIONS IN THE SANDA MASSALA

AREA. MANY OF THE PHOTOS WERE OF FLEC PRESIDENT N'ZITA INSPECTING TROOPS, CONFERRING WITH OFFICERS, SURVEYING TERRAIN, ETC. OTHERS PICTURED FLEC TROOPS IN A VARIETY OF ACTIVITIES, PRINCIPALLY PARADE FORMATIONS, SIMULATED COMBAT EXERCISES, AND PERFORMING CAMP HOUSECLEANING DUTIES. NO PHOTO SHOWED MORE THAN THIRTY SOLDIERS TOGETHER AND SAME SOLDIERS SEEMED TO APPEAR IN MOST PICTURES. ALL WORE CLEAN AND PROPERLY WORN PORTUGUESE-STYLE CAMOUFLAGE FATIGUES AND LEATHER BOOTS. PERSONAL WEAPONS WERE MAINLY FNS AND AKS. VERY LITTLE AMMO WAS CARRIED EVEN IN THE TRAINING EXERCISES PICTURES; NO GRENADES WERE SEEN. OTHER PICTURES SHOWED A SQUAD OF UNIFORMED WOMEN AND ONE OF YOUNG BOYS, ALSO IN UNIFORM; BOTH WERE ARMED. ONE PHOTO SHOWED WHAT BORY SAID WERE A DOZEN FAPLA PRISONERS. THEY WERE FLAT ON THE GROUND IN A SECOND PHOTO WHICH BORY CLAIMED WAS TAKEN "AFTER THEIR EXECUTION." ONLY VEHICLES SEEN WERE TWO LAND ROVERS AND A LIGHT TRUCK.

3. WEAPONS: IN THE VARIOUS PHOTOS OF FLEC ARMAMENT THE FOLLOWING WEAPONS WERE IDENTIFIED:

- ONE RECOILESS RIFLE, PROBABLY A 82MM B-10, WITH A DOZEN SINGLE-ROUND AMMO CONTAINERS;
- ONE 81 OR 82MM MORTAR WITH SEVERAL ROUNDS;
- SEVERAL LIGHT AND HEAVY MACHINE GUNS, INCLUDING A US-MADE M-2;

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- ONE US-STYLE BAZOOKA AND A WEAPON SIMILAR TO THE BELGIAN MODEL 51 83MM ROCKET LAUNCHER;
- ONE US-MADE M-79 GRENADE LAUNCHER WITH SEVERAL ROUNDS;
- PERHAPS 20 ANTI-VEHICLE AND ANTI-PERSONNEL LAND MINE CONTAINERS;
- A WIDE ASSORTMENT OF RIFLES, NUMBERING SEVERAL DOZEN, WHICH INCLUDED ONE UZI, FN, AK, AND G-3 AUTOMATIC RIFLES, AND SEMI-AUTOMATIC AND BOLT-ACTION RIFLES.

-- BORY ADMITTED THAT FOR SOME OF THE ABOVE WEAPONS THERE WAS LITTLE OR NO AMMUNITION.

4. DESPONDENCY: BORY SEEMED A BIT DESPONDENT; HE MADE NONE OF HIS USUAL CLAIMS OF FLEC MILITARY OR DIPLOMATIC SUCCESSES, NOR DID HE THREATEN CABINDA GULF'S IMMINENT DESTRUCTION OR ACTS OF TERRORISM AGAINST US LIVES OR

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ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W
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R 231705Z JUN 77
FM AMEMBASSY LISBON
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1880
INFO AMEMBASSY ABIDJAN
AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS
AMEMBASSY KINSHASA
AMEMBASSY LIBREVILLE
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PROPERTY. INSTEAD, HE REPORTED THAT FLEC HAD RECENTLY
SUFFERED THE FOLLOWING SERIOUS REVERSES:
(A) CUBAN COUNTERATTACK: AFTER BEING HEAVILY
REINFORCED, MIXED CUBAN/FAPLA FORCES LAUNCHED A HEAVY
COUNTERATTACK FROM DINGE TOWARDS THE NORTH EAST FOLLOWING
THE CENTRAL ROAD. BUCO ZAO AND BELIZE WERE RETAKEN IN
THIS ATTACK. HEAVILY-ARMED GARRISONS HAVE SINCE BEEN
INSTALLED. IN BELIZE, FOR EXAMPLE, THE GARRISON NUMBERS
1,000 MEN (AMONG THEM 120-150 CUBANS) AND IS EQUIPPED
WITH AA AND SS MISSILES.
(B) PRESSURE ON SANDA MASSALA: THE CUBANS ATTEMPTED
TO PRESS ON AND CAPTURE SANDA MASSALA, THE "CAPITAL"
OF FLEC TERRITORY. BUT ROUGHER TERRAIN, THE DESTRUCTION
OF KEY BRIDGES, AND GUERRILA ATTACKS BY FLEC TURNED BACK
THE ATTACK. SANDA MASSALA, HOWEVER, WAS SHELLLED ON A
NUMBER OF OCCASIONS, THE LATEST JUNE 16. CUBAN AND
FAPLA TROOPS WERE ALSO SALLYING FROM CONGO-BRAZZAVILLE
(C-B) TERRITORY AND PUTTING PRESSURE ON THE AREA.
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(C) CONGO-BRAZZAVILLE TURNAROUND: AS THE ABOVE
INDICATES, C-B REJOINED THE CUBAN AND ANGOLAN SIDE
DESPITE EXPECTATIONS TO THE CONTRARY BY FLEC. C-B NOW
ALLOWS RPA FORCES TO TRANSIT ITS TERRITORY.
(D) CABINDA CITY REINFORCED: SINCE FLEC THREATS TO

GULF WERE MADE PUBLIC, THE CUBANS STRONGLY REINFORCED CABINDA CITY AND GULF INSTALLATIONS. TROOPS IN THE NORTHWESTERN COASTAL SECTOR, AND VIRTUALLY ALL OF THE ARMOR, WERE TRANSFERED DOWN. MANY TANKS WERE DUG IN AROUND PROTECTED SITES.

(E) WORSENING REFUGEE SITUATION: THE SITUATION IN TERMS OF FOOD, CLOTHING, AND MEDICAL CARE FOR THE "80,000 CABINDAN REFUGEES" IN ZAIRE HAS PROGRESSIVELY DETERIORATED IN THE LAST SEVERAL MONTHS.

5. PRESSURE ON PORTUGAL: BORY SAID THAT FLEC HAD NOT SCORED ANY SUCCESS IN ITS ATTEMPTS TO OBTAIN ASSISTANCE FROM WESTERN COUNTRIES. GRANTED, ALL NATIONS (EXCEPT ITALY, WHICH WAS ONLY ONE TO EXPEL HIM) GIVE FLEC A FRIENDLY HEARING. BUT EVERYONE THE STORY WAS THE SAME: NO ASSISTANCE CAN BE GIVEN. IN PORTUGAL, HOWEVER, SYMPATHY FOR FLEC HAS MOUNTED STEADILY AMONG THE PUBLIC, MILITARY, GOVERNMENT, AND PRESS. IN NO OTHER COUNTRY DOES FLEC OPERATE MORE FREELY. FLEC WILL CONCENTRATE ITS EFFORTS ON PORTUGAL BECAUSE IN PORTUGAL FLEC FINDS THE GREATEST OPPORTUNITIES. A GOP OPINION THAT CABINDA HAS A VALID CLAIM TO INDEPENDENCE WOULD BE VERY HELPFUL. AND BORY CLAIMS FLEC HAS THE LEVER WHICH WILL FORCE THE GOP TO SIDE PUBLICLY WITH FLEC.

6. PASSPORT EVIDENCE: BORY SHOWED EMBOFFS THE DOCUMENT WHICH BISSAFI TRAVELED WITH. IT WAS A ZAIREAN EXIT PASS WHICH LISTED "CABINDA" AS NATIONALITY AND "MINISTER CONFIDENTIAL

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OF FLEC" AS OCCUPATION. NEXT TO THESE ENTRIES WAS A PORTUGUESE VISA. THEN HE SHOWED A COPY OF THE PORTUGUESE DEBARKATION CARD--WHICH CARRIED THE SAME ENTRIES AS THE EXIT PASS -- WITH WHICH HE HAD ENTERED PORTUGAL. IT CARRIED THE PORTUGUESE ENTRY STAMP. BORY ARGUED THAT THE VISAS AND STAMPS ON BASSAFI'S DOCUMENTS AND THOSE OF OTHER AMOUNTED TO TACIT GOP RECOGNITION OF FLEC, AT MINIMUM, A BUREAUCRATIC ERROR THAT CAN BE EXPLOITED TO PRODUCE SUCH RECOGNITION. FLEC SHOWED THOSE DOCUMENTS TO SEVERAL PORTUGUESE NEWSPAPERS WHICH INTERPRETED GOP ACTION AS COMPROMISING AND PROMISED TO PUBLISH COPIES OF THEM. THE INTERNATIONAL DIPLOMATIC FUROR THAT THIS WILL SPARK, SAID BORY, WILL FORCE THE GOP TO TAKE A STAND FOR OR AGAINST FLEC. FLEC'S FRIENDS WILL ENSURE THAT IT GOES IN FAVOR OF FLEC.

7. PRESS CONFERENCE: FLEC WILL HOLD ITS FIRST PUBLIC PRESS CONFERENCE NEXT WEEK IN LISBON. "EVIDENCE" WILL BE RELEASED DETAILING HOW GULF ROYALTY PAYMENTS PAY FOR CZECH ARMAMENT. FLEC WILL STATE THAT AFTER INDEPENDENCE

THREE POLITICAL PARTIES, ONE A SOCIALIST, WILL BE
ESTABLISHED IN CABINDA. BORY WILL DECLARE HIMSELF A
SOCIALIST SO AS TO GAIN GREATER ACCEPTANCE IN EUROPEAN
EYES.

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ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W
-----071974 240929Z /14

R 231705Z JUN 77
FM AMEMBASSY LISBON
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1881
INFO AMEMBASSY ABIDJAN
AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS
AMEMBASSY KINSHASA
AMEMBASSY LIBREVILLE
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8. ASSISTANCE FROM CHINA: LACK OF US SUPPORT WILL
PUSH FLEC INTO PRC ARMS. IN TWO CONTACTS WITH FLEC,
PRC REPS CONVEYED WILLINGNESS TO ASSIST FLEC WITH THE
CONDITION THAT FLEC SEVER ALL TIES WITH BOTH "SOVIET
AND US IMPERIALISMS." FLEC LEADERS HAVE HELD OFF
BECAUSE THEY STILL HAVE EXPECTATIONS OF US HUMANITARIAN
ASSISTANCE. BORY ASKED WHAT WAS US POSITION ON THIS
ASSISTANCE. EMBOFF PROMISED TO PASS ON QUESTION TO
DEPARTMENT.

9. BISSAFI PARTICIPATION: BISSAFI, A SLIGHTLY-BUILT
MAN IN HIS MID-40S, PARTICIPATED LITTLE IN MEETING.
IN POOR FRENCH HE DEFERRED ALL QUESTIONS TO BORY. BORY
CONSULTED HIM SEVERAL TIMES ON CABINDA TERRAIN AND
LOCATIONS OF COMBATING TROOPS, BOTH OF WHICH HE SEEMED
TO KNOW WELL. BORY ASKED EMBOFFS TO EXPLAIN TO HIM
REASONS FOR US POLICY, WHICH WAS DONE IN DETAIL.

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10. ACTION REQUESTED: GUIDANCE RE PARA 8.

11. COMMENT: IF WHAT BORY SHOWED US IN THE PHOTOGRAPHS
IS FLEC'S BEST, THEN THEIR BEST IS LITTLE AND POOR
INDEED. THE FLEC PLAN TO OBTAIN GOP RECOGNITION BY
EMBARRASSING GOP ADDS UP TO MORE WISHFUL THINKING ON
BORY'S PART.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: MILITARY ASSISTANCE, POLICIES, HUMAN RIGHTS, MEETINGS, LIBERATION FRONTS, DIPLOMATIC DISCUSSIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 23-Jun-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 22 May 2009
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977LISBON04845
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770226-0221
Format: TEL
From: LISBON
Handling Restrictions:
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t19770624/aaaaavbl.tel
Line Count: 291
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: a7f0ce77-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION SS
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 6
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Reference: 77 PARIS 17901, 77 LISBON 4582
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 12-Jan-2005 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2051223
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: JUNE 20 MEETING WITH FLEC
TAGS: EINV, PFOR, PINS, MILI, AO, PO, US, CH, FLEC
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/a7f0ce77-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009